

LOG LODGE, BELTSVILLE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH CENTER  
(Agricultural Research Service National Visitor Center)  
(Building 302)  
Powder Mill Road  
Beltsville  
Prince George's County  
Maryland

HABS MD-1242  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240-0001

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

### LOG LODGE, BELTSVILLE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH CENTER (Agricultural Research Service National Visitor Center)

HABS No. MD-1242

- Location:** Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, Powder Mill Road, Beltsville, Prince George's County, Maryland.
- Significance:** The Log Lodge was built by the Civilian Conservation Corps for the Department of Agriculture's research center in Beltsville, Maryland. CCC enrollees used pine and white oak logs harvested on site to build a rustic structure in the form of an oversized cabin with stone chimneys. The Log Lodge is a good example a relatively substantial building constructed by the CCC as a training and make-work project for unemployed young men.
- Description:** The Log Lodge is a two-and-a-half story structure with a large center block and a two-story telescoping wing at each side gable. The roof is covered with green asphalt shingles and supported by exposed trusses. Three shed roof dormers are located at the center of the main block. A large integrated stone chimney appears at each gable end of the center block. The center entrance portico has a front gable roof and peeled log supports. There is an integrated rear porch with a front gable dormer. The walls are formed by horizontal peeled logs crossed and projecting at the corners and held in place with concrete chinking. The window openings feature log sills and lintels. The windows are wood casement sash with diamond-shaped lights.
- On the interior the main block is one large room with an open view of the rustic roof trusses. Another focal point is the horizontal log walls and rustic stone and log fireplaces at either end of the room. The side wings are two stories each, with a log balcony on the end wall of the main room for circulation.
- History:** The Civilian Conservation Corps provided manpower for the expansion and development of the Department of Agriculture's Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC) during the 1930s. As a prominent part of his New Deal legislation, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt created an ambitious program of unemployment relief aimed at the millions of unemployed young men throughout the United States. Initially the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was part of the Emergency Conservation Work (ECW) Act approved on March 31, 1933. The CCC created work camps throughout the country where enrollees between the ages of seventeen and twenty-three years old were given uniforms, shelter, food, and a nominal salary in exchange for manual labor on a variety of

public works projects. Enrollees also received vocational training and self-improvement opportunities. The Department of Labor was charged with creating enrollment policies and processing eligible enrollees, although most of the actual selection and paperwork was done by state relief agencies. The War Department built and managed the camps, using their existing officer corps and supply bureaucracy. Project selection and supervision was done by the “technical agency,” often a branch of the Department of the Interior or the Department of Agriculture. In the Washington area, Department of Agriculture CCC camps worked at the National Arboretum in Northeast Washington, DC and at the research center in Beltsville, Maryland.

The Department of Agriculture began acquiring land in Prince George’s County, Maryland in 1910 to create a new research center. By the 1930s the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center was 12,671 acres. Starting around 1937, enrollees at four CCC camps worked on numerous projects in Beltsville, eventually constructing 21 buildings and 79 miles of roads, trails, and bridges; erecting 242 miles of fence; laying 126 miles of water, sewage, and drainage pipes; landscaping 500 acres; and moving 78,000 trees and shrubs.

The Log Lodge was actually started by another New Deal agency, the Works Progress Administration, in 1934. The WPA hired men from the local relief rolls for public works projects. The Lodge was only completed up to the fourth log by the WPA and the CCC completed the project. The structure was used by the CCC for recreation until the onset of World War II and an economic upturn caused the corps to be discontinued. It was used as a cafeteria from 1942 until 1985. The Log Lodge currently serves a visitor’s center for Beltsville Agricultural Research Center.

Historian: Lisa Pfueller Davidson, HABS Historian, 2007.

#### Project

Information: This short form history was prepared to supplement photographic documentation of Prince George’s County, Maryland. It pulls information from the context study HABS No. DC-858 – “Civilian Conservation Corps Activities in the National Capital Region of the National Park Service” and the Beltsville ARS website. During 2006 HABS staff photographer James Rosenthal photographed multiple sites in Prince George’s County in preparation for the *Buildings of Maryland* publication. Maryland Historical Trust sponsored the photography project through a grant to Preservation Maryland and is producing *Buildings of Maryland* as part of the Society of Architectural Historians’ *Buildings of the United States* series (University of Virginia Press).